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SUBJECT: JAPANESE MORNING PRESS HIGHLIGHTS 04/02/07-2

- 11) South Korean foreign minister in meeting with Foreign Minister Aso expresses regret at reappearance of comfort-women issue
- 12) Aso urges Iran to release captured British soldiers

Defense and security issues:

- 13) Minshuto Secretary General Hatoyama critical of extension of Iraq special measures law
- 14) Released 1971 US document on Okinawa reversion shows Japan ready to pay for reversion of Naha military port
- 15) Leakage of Aegis secrets may have involved a second MSDF seaman
- 16) First deployments of MD-related PAC-3 missiles are not problem free
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- 19) Nikkei poll also gives Ishihara the lead in Tokyo
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in the wrong direction, concern also about medical care, income disparity

24) Minshuto to present own bill on national constitutional referendum

Articles:

11) Wartime comfort women issue: South Korean foreign minister expresses disappointment: Japan-China-ROK foreign ministerial to be held in June

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 1) (Full)  
April 1, 2007

Foreign Minister Taro Aso on Mar. 31 met with his South Korean counterpart Song Min Soon on Jeju Island in South Korea. Son during the meeting criticized Japan over the wartime comfort women issue, noting: "It is regrettable that responsible Japanese leaders are acting in a mistaken manner. I hope they will make statements based on historical facts." Aso sought understanding from the South Korean side, conveying that the government will abide by the stance taken by then Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono in his 1993 statement on the comfort women, which admitted the involvement of the former Imperial Japanese Army and apologized for it.

Aso during an informal press conference on the same evening revealed that Japan, China, and South Korea would hold a foreign ministerial meeting on Jeju Island on June 3 prior to the Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) to be held in Seoul.

Concerning North Korea's nuclear ambitions, the two leaders shared the same perception that it is important for North Korea to steadily

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implement the preliminary measures, including the shutting down and sealing of its nuclear facilities, as agreed on at the six-party talks. They agreed on the stance of aiming at an early resumption of talks on a free trade agreement, which have been suspended since 2004.

Aso and Song confirmed that it is necessary to strengthen the stable basis of bilateral relations. They also decided to search for ways to resume a bureau-director-level bilateral security dialogue after a hiatus of four years and cooperate on policy by holding a meeting of the North American Affairs Bureau director generals of the two countries.

They also agreed to launch a second joint research study committee and hold talks between the chairs of the two countries within April. Regarding negotiations to demarcate their exclusive economic zones (EEZ), they shared the perception that it is necessary to bring progress to bureau-director-level talks.

Song revealed that South Korea during a bilateral ministerial meeting with North Korea worked Pyongyang to make efforts to settle the abduction issue, saying, "If the abduction issue remains unsettled, other issues at the six-party talks will be affected." Aso expressed gratitude and solicited continued assistance.

Textbooks that noted that the Takeshima islets (known as Dokdo by South Korea) are Japanese territories passed the high school text screening by the Japanese Education Ministry. Song reacted sharply against the move, noting, "South Korea cannot accept any claim of Japan on the sovereignty of Dokdo."

12) Foreign Minister Aso urge Iran to release British sailors

SANKEI (Page 5) (Full)  
March 31, 2007

Foreign Minister Taro Aso had a telephone conversation with his Iranian counterpart Manouchehr Mottaki on March 30. Referring to Iran's capture of 15 British sailors and marines, Aso urged Mottaki to free them, saying: "Prolonging the issue will not good for your country's interests. The issue should be resolved as quickly as

possible." Mottaki, however, insisted that the British boat had repeatedly intruded into Iranian territorial waters. He then underscored Iran's position that if Britain admits to the intrusion, Iran will be able to move the issue forward. Aso telephoned Mottaki at the request of the British government.

13) Minshuto Secretary General Hatoyama criticizes government's plan to extend Iraq measures law

MAINICHI (Page 5) (Full)  
March 31, 2007

At a press conference on March 30, Yukio Hatoyama, secretary general of the main opposition party, Minshuto (Democratic Party of Japan), criticized a government-sponsored bill aimed to extend the Iraq Special Measures Law for two years. He stated:

"We strongly oppose the bill because it is a mistaken measure. Like the Koizumi government, the Abe administration supports the wrong war and is now forced to cooperate with the US military."

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14) General Affairs Agency chief Yamanaka announced Japan's readiness to bear Naha Airport reversion costs in 1971

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 3) (Excerpts)  
April 1, 2007

Jiji, Washington

It was revealed on March 30 that in 1971, when talks were underway between the cabinet of Prime Minister Eisaku Sato and the US government on the reversion of Okinawa, Sadanori Yamanaka, then director general of the General Affairs Agency in the Prime Minister's Office, told US National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger that Japan was ready to bear the cost of relocating the US military from Naha Airport. It has already come to light that Japan bore relocation costs in accordance with a secret pact with the United States on the revision of Okinawa. Although the Foreign Ministry has not acknowledged the existence of the secret pact, this concrete proposal on the US military relocation costs from an influential cabinet minister proves the pact's existence.

The document in question, kept at the US National Archives, is a secret cable sent by the US Department of State to the American

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Embassy in Tokyo dated June 3, 1971. The cable outlined a meeting held in Washington in January 1971 between Nakayama and Kissinger. Masaaki Gabe, a professor at the University of the Ryukyus, and others confirmed the contents recently.

15) MSDF petty officer obtained Aegis information from colleague

YOMIURI (Page 1) (Excerpts)  
April 1, 2007

A Maritime Self-Defense Force petty officer 2nd class, 33, of the destroyer Shirane of Escort Flotilla 1 (Yokosuka, Kanagawa Prefecture) who allegedly obtained a floppy disk containing top-secret information on Aegis destroyers copied the information from a colleague's computer, the Yomiuri Shimbun learned on March 31. The information included numerical data that likely indicated the destroyers' capabilities. But neither the 33-year-old petty officer nor his colleague, also a petty officer, had official access to such information. The police suspect other officers might have been involved in the leak. The outflow of highly classified information to petty officers has exposed the MSDF's lax management system.

The police believe that the data could include special defense secrets as stipulated in the Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement

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between the United States and Japan and are questioning the petty

officer and others on suspicion of violating the law to protect secrecy in relations to the security breach.

According to investigative sources, the hard disk seized by the Kanagawa prefectural police from the petty officer's home in Yokosuka in January contained more than 50 files containing classified SDF information, along with games. Some of the files contained information on destroyers. The petty officer copied the files onto his own hard disk from his colleague's computer.

16) First deployment of PAC3: Point is how quickly unit will be deployed in urban areas

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YOMIURI (Page 4) (Excerpts)  
March 31, 2007

The Self-Defense Force (SDF) yesterday deployed the first surface-to-air guided Patriot Advanced Capability 3 (PAC3) system at the Iruma Base (Sayama, Saitama Prefecture). In anticipation of a missile attack from North Korea and other countries, the government aims at constructing a missile defense (MD) system at an early date with the "double shield" of PAC3 and an Aegis destroyer-based Standard Missile 3 (SM3). The government, though, needs to quickly work out measures to deal with a host of problems in terms of the system's operation, such as how swiftly the responsible unit can be deployed in urban areas.

#### Improvement in intercept capability

PAC3 is a missile designed to intercept before it impacts a ballistic missile that the SM3 had failed to shoot down in space.

The current PAC2 system possessed by the Air Self Defense Force (ASDF) is not fully capable of effectively destroying a ballistic missile warhead because the product is designed to destroy the target with broken pieces after it self-destructs. PAC3 is capable of hitting and destroying a missile warhead, equipped with a system to irradiate electric waves and pick up an enemy missile.

In the United States military, the Army is in charge of operating the PAC 3 system, but in the SDF, the air defense missile group of the ASDF operates the system. A senior ASDF official commented: "Based on the view that the system is used to defend the air with fighters, the ASDF possesses the Patriot Air Defense System."

How to deal with situation "within 10 minutes"

Regarding the actual implementation of the PAC3 system, members of the air defense missile group will be flexibly mobilized to an area where a missile is expected to land by vehicles equipped with a missile launcher, radar installation, etc. One of the problems is how to secure areas for deployment. The defense area covered by a PAC3 has a radius of only 15 to 20 kilometers. If the PAC3 system is kept deployed at the Iruma Base, it will be impossible to defend urban areas. Given this, it is necessary to flexibly deploy the unit in cities.

Conditions for deployment are: (1) no high-rise buildings can be around; (2) there must be a wide area; and (3) the unit must be able to engage in activities for a long period of time. In the case of private land or land owned by local governments, it is necessary to obtain permission. The ASDF Nerima Camp (Nerima Ward) and Ichigaya Camp (Shinjuku Ward) are being cited as potential candidate sites at present.

17) Pentagon consultant: China's strategy is to destroy Japanese and Indian satellites

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Abridged slightly)  
April 2, 2007

Takashi Sadahiro, Washington

China, which conducted a successful anti-satellite weapons test in

January, is pursuing a strategy aimed at a system capable of

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destroying all satellites of foreign countries, including Japan, that are flying over China, Michael Pillsbury, an influential Pentagon consultant, reported to the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission on March 30.

According to Pillsbury, the Chinese military is aiming to build by 2010 - 2020 a system capable of destroying satellites not only those of the United States but also of Japan and India that are flying over China. As means to destroy satellites, China is considering electronic jamming, laser irradiation to disable satellites, and cyber attacks on ground base stations, in addition to missiles.

Pillsbury's analysis is based on data compiled by three company-grade space affairs experts of the Chinese People's Army.

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao explained that his country's anti-satellite test targeted no other country. However, if Pillsbury's analysis is true, China clearly intends to destroy communication systems of such countries as Japan and the United States.

18) Poll: Ishihara maintains lead in Tokyo governor race

TOKYO (Top play) (Abridged)  
April 2, 2007

In the run-up to Tokyo's gubernatorial election set for April 8, Gov. Shintaro Ishihara, 74, an independent running for a third term, is ahead, followed by former Miyagi Gov. Shiro Asano, 59, also an independent, the Tokyo Shimbun found yesterday from its second poll of voters in Tokyo. Former Adachi Ward Mayor Manzo Yoshida, 59, recommended by the Japanese Communist Party, and Kisho Kurokawa, 73, an architect backed by minor groups, are trying to catch up. However, nearly 50% of those polled remain undecided. The situation is fluid as the campaign enters its final stage.

The survey was conducted over a period of three days, March 30 through April 1.

In the survey, 77.3% answered "yes" when asked if they would go to the polls. Including those who will go to the polls if they can, the total proportion was 92.6%.

Ishihara has stretched his lead over Asano from the last survey conducted March 16-18 before the election was announced.

In the latest survey, Ishihara's lead over Asano was wider among female respondents. In addition, Ishihara was evenly supported among all generations, particularly gaining strong support from those in their 60s and 70s. Asano has garnered support to a certain extent from those in their 40s to 60s. However, he has yet to gain support from those in their 20s. Yoshida and Kurokawa remain stagnant among all generations.

The survey was conducted over a period of three days, March 30 through April 1, on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis, with the aim of obtaining answers from a total of 1,000 voters in Tokyo.

19) Poll: Ishihara ahead in Tokyo race

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 1) (Abridged)

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April 2, 2007

In the run-up to the nation's upcoming quadrennial local elections, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun conducted a public opinion survey in five prefectures, including Tokyo and Hokkaido, to look into election campaigns in their final stages. The five prefectures are where the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and the leading opposition

Democratic Party of Japan (Minshuto) are in a de facto duel, with their affiliated candidates running. In Tokyo, Shintaro Ishihara, the incumbent governor, is ahead of former Miyagi Gov. Shiro Asano and all other candidates. In Hokkaido, Kanagawa Prefecture, and Fukuoka Prefecture, the incumbents are leading other candidates. In Iwate Prefecture, a DPJ-recommended new face is widening his lead over an-LDP recommended new face and all other candidates.

20) Poll: Matsuzawa ahead in Kanagawa race

TOKYO (Page 1) (Abridged)  
April 2, 2007

In the run-up to Kanagawa Prefecture's upcoming gubernatorial election set for April 8, the Tokyo Shimbun conducted a public opinion survey of local voters from March 30 through April 1 to probe the situation. In the race, Shigefumi Matsuzawa, 49, the incumbent governor running for a second term, is ahead. Tadashi Sugino, 48, a new face and former president of Saitama Railway Corp., and Hiroko Kamoi, 62, also a new face representing a civic group, remain behind. However, nearly 50% of all those polled have yet to decide on whom to vote for. The situation appears fluid as the race enters the final stage.

21) Poll: Incumbents have lead in Hokkaido, Fukuoka; DPJ candidate maintains lead in Iwate

TOKYO (Page 1) (Abridged)  
April 2, 2007

With the nation's 16th quadrennial local elections having kicked off, Kyodo News polled local electorates in 13 prefectures, including Tokyo and Hokkaido, and in four government-designated cities to probe situations in the run-up to the April 8 gubernatorial and mayoral elections.

In the five gubernatorial races, the incumbents affiliated with the Liberal Democratic Party or with the Democratic Party of Japan (Minshuto) are leading in the polls. In Hokkaido, Harumi Takahashi, the incumbent aiming for a second term, is leading Satoshi Arai and all other candidates. In Fukuoka Prefecture, Wataru Aso, who chairs the National Governors' Association, is gaining a steady advantage over Shuji Inatomi and other candidates.

In the prefectures of Iwate and Kanagawa, DPJ-affiliated candidates are leading all other candidates. In Iwate, where all those running in the race are new faces, Takuya Tatsuso is ahead of Junichi Yanagimura, who is an LDP-affiliated candidate, and all others.

22) Poll: 30% have read the manifestos in governor races

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 1) (Abridged)  
April 2, 2007

Those who have read the now-legalized manifestos of candidates

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running in gubernatorial elections accounted for only 30%, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun found from its polls conducted in five prefectures, including Tokyo and Hokkaido, to probe the ongoing campaigns for governorship in their final stages. Iwate Prefecture marked the highest score at 37%, followed by Tokyo at 34%, Hokkaido at 32%, Fukuoka Prefecture at 24%, and Kanagawa Prefecture at 17%. As seen from these figures, manifestos were not well read in these five electoral districts where the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and the leading opposition Democratic Party of Japan are in facing off.

23) Cabinet Office survey: 36% say, "Education is heading in wrong direction"; Medical services, income gaps fanning concerns

SANKEI (Page 2) (Full)  
April 1, 2007

The results of an opinion poll on the social consciousness of the population, compiled by the Cabinet Office as of Mar. 31, has revealed that an increasing number of Japanese are concerned about

the state of education in the country. This outcome presumably reflects a severe public view of school education due to the issue of school bullying and declining academic performance of children.

The survey was conducted on 10,000 male and female adults throughout the nation from January through February this year. The rate of effective response was 55.9%.

The largest portion of the public, 36.1%, cited education as heading in the wrong direction (multiple replies were allowed), exceeding the 35.6% who cited public safety as an area of concern. Concern over education, up 12.3 points from the previous survey carried out in February 2006, was the highest ever recorded.

Those who replied, "Medical and welfare services are becoming worse" reached 31.9% and those who noted, "The disparities among regions is become worse" were at 26.5%, both figures increasing more than 10 points from the previous survey.

24) Minshuto to present own plan to amend national referendum bill

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Full)  
March 31, 2007

Minshuto (Democratic Party of Japan) President Ichiro Ozawa met with party Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama in Tokyo last night. They agreed to submit to the House of Representatives the party's own plan amending the government's national referendum bill governing the procedures for revising the Constitution.

The revision plan is expected to be almost the same as the revision proposal already submitted by the ruling parties, excepting for the part calling for a "general national referendum" to take a vote also on important national administrative issues. Hatoyama said he told Ozawa: "Minshuto will prepare a plan to amend the bill and hold discussions in an effort to enact the bill," and Ozawa replied, "I will entrust the matter to you."

Hatoyama is trying to find ways to enact the national referendum bill in the current Diet session by reaching an agreement with the ruling camp, but Ozawa has already indicated that he would oppose the revision proposal by the ruling parties. On the idea of a "general national referendum", the ruling parties' revision bill

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noted in an additional clause, "discussion will be conducted on issues related to constitutional revision." The focus of attention is to what extent Minshuto's plan will come closer to the amendment proposal of the ruling camp. Ozawa and Hatoyama have agreed to submit their own revision plan, but they reportedly have different views about how to proceed with negotiations with the ruling camp. Intra-party coordination is expected to be difficult.

SCHIEFFER